

# NEWS RELEASE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CALTRANS JOINS WITH CHP TO PROTECT HIGHWAY WORKERS

**SACRAMENTO** – Concerned about a spike in highway worker deaths, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has partnered with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to provide enhanced speed and DUI enforcement in highway construction and maintenance zones across California.

Four Caltrans workers have died in traffic-related incidents in the last year. Three of them were killed within 48 days, during May and June. Those deaths reversed a steady trend of reduced fatalities, which is partially attributed to the Slow for the Cone Zone public awareness campaign established in 1999. A total of 178 Caltrans workers have died on the job since 1924.

"Motorists often automatically slow down when they see police or CHP officers," said Caltrans Interim Director Malcolm Dougherty. "We also want them to slow down for Caltrans vehicles and equipment."

The CHP officers will park their patrol vehicles within work zones. Caltrans hopes that the presence of the officers will help to slow traffic or encourage vehicles to move over at least one lane from a highway work zone, as required by the Move Over law.

"Adhering to this law can mean the difference between life and death," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "The only way to prevent tragedies from occurring on the side of the road is by giving emergency personnel, highway workers and the public some space."

The CHP will also employ one or more additional enforcement vehicles at some work zones. Officers will be on hand to ensure safety, and will ticket violators that are traveling too fast in work zones. The need is significant. Caltrans currently has some 800 ongoing construction contracts valued at more than \$10 billion.

The Move Over law, which took effect in 2007, requires drivers to move over a lane when emergency vehicles displaying flashing lights are present. It was amended in 2009 to add Caltrans vehicles with flashing amber lights.

Caltrans, the CHP, the California Office of Traffic Safety, and the Department of Motor Vehicles are working as partners to increase awareness of the law – through the Internet, public service announcements, billboards, and the media.

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